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From Author to Reader

A Manual for Writers

Judith Latham

Room 111

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



National Agricultural Library

Preface

FROM AUTHOR TO READER: A MANUAL FOR WRITERS, by Judith Latham, Information Division, Economics Management Staff, U.S. Department of Agriculture. July 1983.

Report publishing is essential to the mission of your agency. A vital part of your job is to investigate and analyze; another vital part is to report your findings. Good communication is the key to that function.

This manual is for people in the Economic Research Service, the Statistical Reporting Service, and the Economics Management Staff who prepare reports, summaries, memos, and directives. It can help you produce readable publications more efficiently and reach the right audience for each one.

Clear writing will enable your audiences to apply your research findings more easily. Making your reports readily understandable is extremely important, especially now that free distribution of publications is limited and readers are required to buy them.

In the case of economics there are no important propositions that cannot be stated in plain language. Qualifications and refinements are numerous and of great technical complexity. These are important for separating the good students from the dolts. But in economics the refinements rarely, if ever, modify the essential and practical point.

John Kenneth Galbraith,
The Atlantic (March 1978)

Special thanks go to Susan DeGeorge for graphic design of the manual and to Bonnie Moore for editorial assistance.

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Organizational Abbreviations

Organizational units that appear frequently in this handbook are abbreviated as follows:

EMS	Economics Management Staff, USDA
ERS	Economic Research Service, USDA
GPO	U.S. Government Printing Office
OI	Office of Information, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, USDA
NTIS	National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce
RIB	Research Information Branch, Information Division, EMS, USDA
SRS	Statistical Reporting Service, USDA
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
WAOB	World Agricultural Outlook Board, USDA

Chapter 1: Introduction

This manual will help you improve your skills in planning, organizing, and writing your reports and will acquaint you with your agency's publishing procedures. The manual will explain each step in the process and show you how the Information Division of the Economics Management Staff can help you. It will also be useful to supervisors who plan and review publications, to secretaries who prepare manuscripts and camera copy, and to other staff members who get involved at any stage of the publishing process.

Background

This manual contains guidelines that make publications easier to write, easier to prepare, and easier for readers to use. It evolved from the writing workshops that members of the Information Division regularly offer to employees of the Economic Research Service (ERS), the Statistical Reporting Service (SRS), and the Economics Management Staff (EMS). This edition updates information in two earlier handbooks, *From Pen to Print* (1974) by Angela Wray and *Author to Reader: Report Publishing Handbook* (1980) by Deborah Smith. And, it includes new material from the oral presentations of the writing workshop coordinator and trainers.

Services of the Information Division

If you plan to publish your research through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or through your agency, the Information Division can help you. Here is a checklist of available services.

Writing Workshops

Our workshops can give you basic guidance on technical writing, practice in improving your writing skills, and information about editing, clearing, publishing, and disseminating results of your research. Members of the Information Division conduct the workshops, thus promoting better communication between those who write and those who edit.

Writers' Manual

This book, *From Author to Reader: A Manual for Writers*, is the text for the writing workshops. It is also your agency's handbook on writing and publishing, serving the professional needs of new employees, veteran writers and researchers, supervisors, secretaries and typists, information staff members, and others involved in the writing or publishing process.

Pre-Edit Reviews

We invite you to submit your manuscripts to us for an informal and preliminary assessment of editorial quality and publishability (see p. 29). We can advise you on the report's format and organization, give you suggestions on tables and charts, correct basic problems of style, and help you plan your report to meet the needs of your readers. A good time to ask for a pre-edit review is just as soon as you have submitted your first draft for peer review.

Formal Editorial Reviews

When the Information Division accepts your manuscript for formal editorial review, it is assigned to an editor who is responsible for it until the final report comes off press. The editor will ascertain that the following criteria are met: the report is clear, concise, and well organized; all elements (such as abstract, keywords, summary, contents, and objectives) are complete; the thesis or central finding is well focused for the reader; the intended audience is clearly identified; the format, style, and technical level of writing are appropriate for that audience; the report is free of grammatical or stylistic errors (including those enumerated in the *U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual*); the tables and figures are accurate and compatible with the text; and the references are correctly cited.

Publication Schedules

You and your editor jointly determine a schedule for editing, clearing, and publishing your research manuscript. This schedule establishes who does what and when between the time you submit your manuscript for formal editing and the time the printed report is made available to readers.

Tailored Distribution

Each published report is tailored to the target audience the author has identified at the beginning of the planning process (see chapter 6). You and your editor establish a distribution plan. The USDA program for user fees limits free distribution to 1,000 copies. Some reports are also available for sale through the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). All are for sale through the National Technical Information Service (NTIS), either in paper or microfiche.

ERS Abstracts

A periodic newsletter lists abstracts of all ERS published reports. This newsletter enables us to let a wider audience know about the research findings in the reports. Some readers are satisfied with information contained in the 100-word abstracts of longer reports; others can order the full reports from GPO or NTIS.

Author Evaluations

You will receive an editing and publishing evaluation questionnaire after your report comes off press. This questionnaire is a good vehicle for you to express compliments or criticisms of any phase of the publishing process. We use your candid evaluations to improve our editorial services.

Publishing Vehicles

You have several options for publishing the results of your work. The vehicle you choose will depend on your objectives, your intended audience, the technical level of your writing, and your time and budget constraints. The following outlets are available:

Research Reports

Research reports edited by the Research Information Branch of the EMS Information Division are published in a departmental series—for example, an Agricultural Economic Report or a Statistical Bulletin. (See pp. 28-32 for details on publication and clearance. The appendix lists report series and information on the purpose, audience, and content for each type.)

Staff Reports

Many reports do not fit into the departmental series. But, research colleagues outside USDA or fellow staff members may need the material. Such reports, which may contain valuable data series or explain an interesting new methodology, can be issued as staff reports. Staff reports receive agency clearance; they are reproduced in limited quantities and distributed informally to the research community. Staff reports are also sold through NTIS.

Outlook and Situation Reports

Outlook and situation reports present USDA's latest forecasts of supply, demand, and prices for major commodities and related topics such as exports, finance, farm inputs, land values, and world and regional developments. Generally issued quarterly, these reports also explain the rationale behind the forecasts, predict the implications for agriculture, and provide supporting statistical tables and charts.

Outlook and situation reports have a standard format. The summary—which will have already been released on the day the World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB) approved the report—comes first. It is followed by text that analyzes the situation and outlook in detail. Supporting short tables and graphs often accompany the text. Special articles on such areas as trade developments, commodity programs, and research findings may follow the analytical section. Remaining pages are devoted to statistical tables.

These reports, edited by the Current Information and Popular Publications Branch of the EMS Information Division, require formal review and approval by WAOB; their publication is timed to coincide with its scheduled meetings. (See pp. 33-34 for details on publication and clearance.)

Journal Articles

ERS publishes several journals which disseminate research results:

Agricultural Economics Research (AER) is a quarterly journal that publishes technical research in agricultural economics and statistics. Most of

its readers are professional economists. Its major articles focus on research methodology, commodity studies, and functional analyses. *AER* represents USDA-funded research in contrast to another scholarly journal, *The American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, which represents principally land-grant college research. *AER* is a refereed journal. All articles receive peer review before acceptance by the ERS economics editor; the articles are then edited for organization and style by the Information Division editor.

National Food Review (NFR) is a quarterly magazine that provides information on food economics research in a semipopular style for a nontechnical audience. Its diverse readership includes groups with a wide range of technical understanding: university researchers, nutritionists, economists, consumers, food industry and agribusiness leaders, government policymakers, and members of the Congress. Its articles are often picked up by the press and by trade journals, thereby reaching a wider audience. Articles for *NFR* are submitted by program specialists to the economics editor for technical review. An EMS Information Division editor then reviews all articles to ensure effective communication with *NFR*'s broad audience. To submit or explore preparing an article, you should contact the economics editor (listed on the inside front cover of the journal).

Farmline magazine is ERS' primary popular publication. Published 11 times annually, the magazine contains ERS material which its editors judge to be most relevant to readers interested in agriculture and rural affairs. Its direct audience includes members of the news media, government decisionmakers, extension employees, university department heads in agricultural economics, and libraries. Reprints and broadcasts of its articles reach millions of other Americans. Most articles are written by EMS Information Division personnel in cooperation with research specialists. However, some articles are written by researchers who receive byline credit.

Agricultural Outlook (AO) is a semitechnical publication, published 11 times annually, that summarizes developments in the farm economy, farm income, livestock, crops, world agriculture and trade, the general economy, food and marketing, inputs, transportation, and policy. Each issue contains a feature article drawn from these topics. *AO*'s audience includes analysts and managers in government, agribusiness, farm associations, and financial institutions. ERS researchers write articles at the request of the economics editor. Analysts and managers from ERS, WAOB, and other USDA agencies review the articles.

Other Journals: You may prefer to publish through outside journals of agricultural economics, finance, international trade, statistics, or rural sociology. Articles for outside journals are cleared in the originating division and by the Research Information Branch via an EMS-31 form (Request for Clearance of Speeches, Articles, or ERS/SRS State Report).

Congressional Reports

Some important reports to the Congress are published as congressional committee prints. The Research Information Branch provides editorial assistance, plans distribution, and coordinates appropriate public information activities. You should discuss clearance procedures with the chief of the Research Information Branch.

Speeches and Conference Papers

Your paper given at a professional conference may appear later in a conference proceedings, published either by USDA or by the sponsoring organization. All speeches are cleared in the originating division and by the Research Information Branch under an EMS-31 clearance form.

Chapter 2: Planning and Organizing the Manuscript Draft

Careful planning is the first step in the writing and publishing process. Following the guidelines in this chapter will help you simplify your job and produce a better report.

Logical Approach

Technical writing follows a logical progression that differs from other forms of writing—for example, creative writing. A novelist writes principally to entertain, not to inform. However, you as a technical writer must ask yourself three important questions at the outset: What is the purpose of the report? Who will use the information? How? The answers you give will determine everything else—your organization, format, style, technical level of writing, length, and publishing vehicle.

Identifying your Audience

Who will read your report?

After you have completed the research on your project, list the specific audiences you want to reach. You must have a clear idea of those people for whom you are writing because it determines how you present your information. Never begin writing as if your readers were some amorphous mass.

To pinpoint your prospective readers, think of the audience groups you just identified in your list. Then, ask yourself the following questions: Do they have technical training? Do they want the research findings, or are they principally interested in the research process? What attitude do they have toward the information? That is, are they anxiously awaiting it? Or, are you going to have to compete for their attention? Your answers will determine how technical your language should be, whether you should emphasize the results or the process, and how long your report should be.

Let's take an example. This manual is addressed to a diverse audience: authors of research publications in agricultural economics, statistics, and related fields; agency administrators and managers; editorial and publications specialists; and

typists and word processors. All its readers have technical competence in some field, but their level of formal education differs widely, and they have received their training in a variety of disciplines. These readers want concrete information on how they can do their jobs better, whether as writers, reviewers, or producers of a final report. They share a common attitude—namely, a high level of professional motivation. All readers will need some of the information in this manual. But, some are novices to agency writing and publishing procedures, and others are veterans who want to refine their skills. Therefore, this manual had to be organized so that each user could easily locate relevant information and could readily understand all explanations.

ERS and SRS authors also write for diverse audiences, including farmers, consumers, agribusiness people, policymakers at all levels of government, researchers, statisticians, field staff, extension agents, members of the media, and other groups affected by complex agricultural issues.

Reports that have such diverse audiences should be written so that even the least knowledgeable among them may gain a clear understanding of your information. You need to organize your report so that all interests are served. For example, a report aimed at both policymakers and researchers should have the technical material placed at the end of the report; only that technical information needed for a clear understanding of the subject should be placed at the beginning.

Clarifying your Purpose

Why are you writing your report?

Your answer has two important functions: (1) it helps you organize your writing around a central theme, and (2) it helps you guide your readers through the logical process of your thoughts so that they can understand and use the information.

Plan and write your manuscript to meet your readers' needs. Begin by writing a concise, direct, and easily understood statement of your objectives. This statement should appear in the introduction, preferably in the first paragraph. Tell

your readers what you will do and what to look for in your exposition. You need to convey what they can expect to get out of it. If you motivate them at the beginning, you have a better chance of holding their attention to the end.

Do not confuse your research objectives with your report's objectives, as they are not necessarily the same. Your research objectives might be to develop a new methodology or to determine the economic impact a new policy might have on a segment of the food and fiber system. Your report's objectives should be to present your findings and describe, analyze, interpret, assess, or explain these findings as they relate to your readers' needs.

Organizing your Ideas

What are your major ideas, and how are you going to present them?

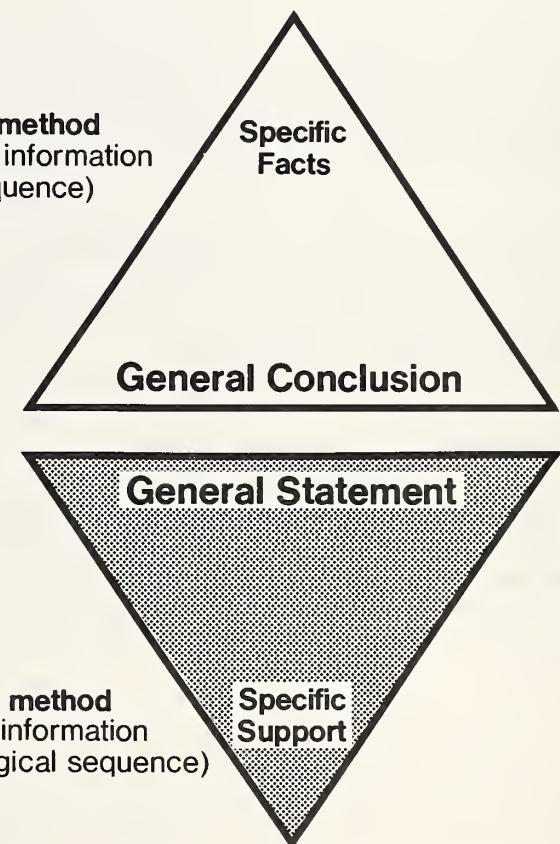
After you have identified your audience and have clarified your objectives, your organization should flow logically from them. List your major findings. Then, construct an outline.

The outline provides the scaffolding for your report, determining the sequence, or order, in which you will present your information. It helps to write a fairly detailed outline of your major points. Many writers find that a sentence outline is more useful than a topic outline. A sentence outline helps you build a logical presentation, which makes writing the manuscript draft easier.

Because writing is a complicated business, it is easier to do the organizing first. That way you will not have to organize and write at the same time. You don't need to stick to your outline slavishly. You can always reorganize later.

There are different ways to organize a report. In graduate school, you might have described your research in almost the same order that you did your research: hypothesis, methodology, findings (presented step by step), and implications. That organization might have been well suited to your academic purposes. However, in most professional reports and summaries, it is not the most effective way to report your research.

Most readers don't want to wait to the end of your report—whether it is 2 pages or 200 pages—to discover what you found out during the research process. They want to know right away, so put your key findings near the front. This approach is the opposite to that for writing a mystery novel, where reader interest is heightened by the element of suspense. This concept, one of the most important principles of effective writing, but one that is difficult for many researchers to accept at first, is most often referred to as the inverted pyramid. Graphically, it looks like this:



This diagram represents the difference between the sequence in gathering information and in reporting it. The inverted pyramid is the best way to report your research. The main idea goes first, followed by supporting ideas or interesting details.

Most readers do not have time to read reports and longer articles from cover to cover. They might read the summary, look at the table of contents and the introduction, but read in detail only those portions of special interest to them. Therefore, you need to make sure that they do not miss your key findings and that you have made crystal clear those points you want them to remember.

If you tell your readers right away what you found out and state your purpose in unmistakable terms, you are more likely to hold their attention. If interested, they will be better prepared to follow the logic of your presentation.

This organization applies equally to sections or chapters of longer reports. Put the main idea or thesis first; then, give detailed information.

Remember your purpose and your readers. You are writing to inform people and to communicate what you have found out.

What Every Research Report Needs

Research reports are separately printed monographs that analyze some significant aspect of current research in agricultural economics or statistics. Because these reports can be lengthy and rather technical, you need to organize your writing for the greatest effect. Research reports require specific elements for publication. Each element has a distinct function¹ and should be placed in the following order:

¹Examples of an abstract, table of contents, summary, and introduction appear on pp. 8-9.

Title

The title should be short and to the point to whet your reader's interest and allow easier recall. Put the most important words at the beginning so that they will be the reader's first impression. Favor short, pithy words over longer, more elegant ones. Remember the function of a good title, like a good report, is to communicate, not to impress.

Abstract

Your abstract is limited to 100 words. It should report the chief findings, not describe the research method unless the research itself is concerned principally with developing a new methodology. Nonetheless, the reader will still need to know how well the new research method performed. The abstract is generally the only part of the report that goes into computerized retrieval systems; thus, informative abstracts can communicate better than descriptive ones to readers who must rely solely on those 100 words.

Keywords

Keywords are index terms for the principal topics of the report. Reports in a departmental series are limited to 10 words; 3 or 4 are often sufficient.

Preface

The preface is optional. It may provide a short introduction to the report, tell why it was written, indicate its purpose, or provide background not appropriate to the main text.

Foreword

A foreword is rarely used except in major works. It is an introductory note written as an endorsement by someone important and by someone other than the author. It may highlight the relevance of the research to contemporary issues.

Acknowledgments

A separate section thanking those who have provided substantial assistance is optional. Many writers prefer to acknowledge the contribution of colleagues in a footnote at the bottom of the first page of the body of the report.

Contents

The table of contents generally lists only the first- and second-level headings, worded exactly as they are in the body of the report. Exceptions to the second-level limit, where third-level headings are integral elements of the report, should be discussed with your editor.

Summary

The summary, like the abstract, presents the most significant findings of your research in the most easily understood and nontechnical style possible. It may also relate the report to current issues. Limit your summary to no more than two double-spaced pages. Along with the abstract, the summary is probably the most widely read part of the report.

Summaries, like news stories, present the most important facts first. Like news stories, they highlight what is new, not what is already common knowledge. The first sentence, or lead, presents your major findings. The rest of the first paragraph simply expands on that lead. It may briefly discuss the implications or relevance of that lead. Succeeding paragraphs expand on the first, preferably discussing topics in the same order you introduced them earlier.

Keep your sentences short. Short sentences are easier to understand by everyone, including your most sophisticated readers. If your lead sentence exceeds 25 words, go over it carefully to see if it is clear and readable. If not, delete some facts and use them in the next sentence.

Brevity is the key to a good summary. Use the active voice wherever possible, especially in the lead sentence. (For a discussion of the active voice, see p. 13.) Include only what the reader needs, and use only words that the least

sophisticated of your readers can understand. If you must use technical terms to convey your message, define them within commas or parentheses.

A summary does not generally include research objectives, and it should contain as little background information or methodology as possible. It does not usually have headings, footnotes, or literature citations. A summary may, however, contain short tables or charts highlighting significant comparisons in the report.

Introduction

Many authors find the introduction the most difficult part to write. An effective introduction motivates the reader to continue through the text. Your opening paragraph or paragraphs should answer the following questions: Why did you do the study, or what were your research objectives? What is your purpose in writing the report, or what can your reader get out of it? What did you find out, or what is your thesis?

Get to the point quickly. Assume that your reader is busy and will not continue reading if you start out with a discussion of seemingly unrelated, nonessential points. You might want to start with a thesis statement. It is perfectly acceptable to repeat some information from the abstract or summary. However, you will probably want to write it differently to reinforce key points without making them appear repetitive.

You may need to include some background material to put the report into context or to show its relevance to contemporary issues. Take care not to ramble. Lengthy discussions of historical background, research methodology, or reviews of the literature do not belong in the introduction; put them in a separate background section.

Body of the Report

The body of the report, or text, should present your research findings in a logical and coherent manner. The analysis should be clear, concise, and meticulously prepared. (The next section on outlining will show you how to organize the body of your report.)

PROGRESS OF SOLAR TECHNOLOGY AND POTENTIAL FARM USES, by Walter G. Heid, Jr., and Warren K. Trotter; National Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Economic Report No. 489.

Abstract

The most efficient use of solar energy on farms is space heating and cooling of livestock buildings, drying crops, and heating farm homes. Low-cost, homemade solar collectors, having multiple uses and a payback of less than 5 years, are the most popular systems. In contrast, most commercially produced systems are still too expensive for agricultural uses, partly because they fail to qualify for tax credits as large as those allowed for residential uses. The solar industry has shown little interest in marketing the low-cost technologies specifically developed for agriculture.

Keywords: Solar, agriculture, economics, research, development.

Acknowledgment

The authors acknowledge partial funding of this project by the U.S. Department of Energy and the review and assistance provided by the Southern Agricultural Energy Center, Tifton, Ga., Dr. James L. Butler, Director.

Note

Use of company product trade names in this publication is for description only and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Washington, D.C. 20250

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Summary

Solar energy's modest but successful farm uses include crop drying and heating and cooling livestock buildings and farm homes. However, with interest rates of 15 to 20 percent, only solar energy systems with a payback of about 5 years are economically feasible. Solar collectors must be multipurpose and used for as many days as possible each year to absorb the investment.

Solar collector technology needs further research and development (R&D) as well as a delivery system for transferring the technology to farms. Problems persist in market penetration, testing, certification, and value determination of homemade collectors for lending and tax credit purposes. The solar industry has shown little interest in marketing the low-cost technologies specifically developed for agriculture by the public sector nor has the industry focused R&D on the needs of the agricultural sector. Thus, with declining Federal funding for research, solar energy's future in agriculture is uncertain.

This Economic Research Service report discusses the potential of solar energy for several agricultural applications:

Solar grain drying offers the most immediate potential for savings because storage and infielld losses of high-moisture grain cut deeply into farm profits. Several hundred grain farmers who have invested in solar energy systems report paybacks of as little as 5 years. The potential for solar drying other crops, although promising, has not been fully researched.

Solar heating for greenhouses that grow vegetables and other items is less economical than energy conservation of fossil fuels. Fossil fuel requirements are reduced 90 percent when energy conservation is combined with solar energy. Solar energy accounts for around 10 percent of this reduction.

The potential of solar energy in agriculture is uncertain. Its role depends on future energy prices and the development of other alternate energy sources, such as nuclear and hydroelectric power, as well as the competitiveness of redesigned conventional power systems.

Progress of Solar Technology and Potential Farm Uses

**Walter G. Heid, Jr.
Warren K. Trotter***

Introduction

The most efficient use of solar energy on farms is space heating and cooling of livestock buildings, drying crops, and heating farm homes. This study assesses progress in the development of economical solar energy systems and estimates the potential for their adoption in the agricultural sector. The primary focus is on solar collector systems, or direct solar thermal energy. Other solar energy technologies also are discussed where they appear to be acceptable alternatives to flat-plate collector systems. Farm activities are grouped according to energy needs to determine the potential for solar energy in agriculture.

This study summarizes nearly a decade of intensive solar research and development (R&D) aimed at agricultural applications. It cites many examples of progress and also identifies laboratory-designed solar collectors still needing field tests and economic evaluation. Public funding for solar R&D is undergoing major reductions. The content and conclusions of this study will be helpful to policymakers who must evaluate the ability of private industry to assume the leading role in developing direct solar thermal systems for agriculture.

Background

Events over the past decade suggest that future supplies of liquid fuels are highly uncertain and periodic shortages are likely to

*The authors are agricultural economists with the Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, stationed at the U.S. Grain Marketing Research Laboratory, Manhattan, Kans., and the Richard B. Russell Research Center, Athens, Ga., respectively.

Conclusions (or Implications)

A separate section in which you draw conclusions or implications from the issues discussed is optional. Such a final statement is sometimes useful if the report has a thesis. It can tie up loose ends or make recommendations that specific readers may want to implement. It should not be exclusively a synopsis of the report; the summary has already served that purpose.

References

The references, or literature citations, include only those sources actually referred to in the body of the report. They are listed alphabetically by author. If six or fewer references are cited, you may handle them as footnotes. (See pp. 23-27 for a discussion of literature citations.)

Appendix

An appendix or a set of appendixes at the back of the report is optional. Here you might include supplemental material which is not necessary for readers to understand the substance of the report—for example, a technical discourse on methodology, supplemental equations, or highly detailed tables.

How to Outline the Research Report

Outlining is the most efficient way to organize the body of your report. If you were studying a specific commodity, for example, and wanted to evaluate a proposed government policy intervention, you might start with a simple topic outline like this:

I. Introduction

- Research objectives
- Audience (who cares?)
- Purpose (why?)
- Thesis (optional)
- Mandate (optional)

II. Background

- Economic setting
- Research method
- Literature review (optional)

III. Major areas of inquiry—for example,

- Current supply
- Current demand
- Effects of a proposed policy intervention
- Costs of change
- Benefits of change
- Comparison of costs and benefits
- Analysis of decisionmaking process
- Projections to 19____

IV. Implications (what now?)

V. References

VI. Appendix

You already know how to write a good introduction; namely, you concentrate on your purpose and your readers. As you start to outline, you need to clarify these elements; together with your thesis, they will form the organizing principle for everything that follows.

The background section sets the stage for your report—nothing more. Many writers have trouble holding the attention of their readers because half their text is devoted to background, commentary on previous studies, methodology (their own and others), and literature reviews. It is best to shift as much material as possible from the background section to the section that focuses on your major areas of inquiry (see sample outline).

Try to state the major points of each area of inquiry in a few complete sentences. You can later use these topic sentences to introduce each subsection. Start each subsection with a summary paragraph outlining the objectives and results of each area of inquiry. Be sure your areas of inquiry complement the text of the introduction.

Your implications section needs to answer the question: What difference will it make if one pursues the policy just outlined? For example, how will it affect other parts of the economy, or how will it affect U.S. production and trade?

You will become involved in writing up your references later. However, in the planning stage, you do need to ascertain that your citations are complete—for

example, the authors' names are complete; all titles and names of documents are complete; the publisher and the place and date of publication have been recorded; and all series numbers, volume numbers, and page numbers are accurate.

The appendix will contain any sections of your report not already mentioned. Use it principally for highly technical information or for data of interest only to the specialist.

You are ready to write once you have this kind of outline. If you keep it in front of you as you work, your report will be well balanced, and it will require less rewriting after it has been edited.

Chapter 3: Writing the Manuscript Draft

You now know how to plan and organize your manuscript. But, when you actually begin to write your first draft, you will also need to be aware of some other critical elements which will ensure that your manuscript is grammatically correct, your style is clear and concise, your format meets your agency's requirements for formal editing, and your writing complies with the rules of the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) Style Manual. Good writing includes not only avoiding grammatical problems but also learning how to use the language to make the greatest impact on your readers. Concentrating on these two complementary objectives will improve your literary style.

Avoiding Common Writing Problems

Eight writing problems common to ERS and SRS manuscripts have fairly simple solutions. Employ these solutions to eliminate ungrammatical or awkward constructions and to make your writing clear and concise.

1. **Nonagreement of subject and verb.** Be sure that the predicate, or main verb, agrees in number with its noun subject.

WRONG: The introduction of new plant varieties and their development has promoted large-scale commercial production.

RIGHT: The introduction of new plant varieties and their development have promoted large-scale commercial production.

2. **Nonparallel construction.** Use the same parts of speech, or word forms, to perform similar functions within a single sentence. That is, decide which form to use—noun or verb—and stick with it. The very likeness of form will enable your reader to more easily follow the logic of your thought.

WRONG: The researchers analyzed the results of those extension personnel who helped in planning the survey and collection of the data.

RIGHT: The researchers analyzed the results of those extension personnel who helped in planning the survey and collecting the data.

3. **Unclear antecedent.** An antecedent refers to the noun for which any subsequent pronoun substitutes. Avoid confusion by repeating the noun instead of using a misleading pronoun. Furthermore, do not use the pronouns, “it” or “this,” to refer to the whole sense of the preceding sentence.

WRONG: It may be possible to substitute harvesting machines for manual labor because of the economic advantage. However, some technical problems must be solved before it becomes practical.

RIGHT: It may be possible to substitute harvesting machines for manual labor because of the economic advantage. However, some technical problems must be solved before harvesting machines are practical.

4. **Dangling modifier.** Modifiers that dangle are phrases that do not relate to the subject of the sentence. You can often introduce a person (or other agent) to immediately follow the modifying phrase.

WRONG: Using subregional surveys, the data could be disaggregated.

RIGHT: Using subregional surveys, researchers could disaggregate the data.

5. Passive voice. Use the active voice whenever possible. The most straightforward order for an English sentence is subject-verb-object. Determine who is doing what to whom (or what), and state your findings in precisely that order.

POOR: When the analysis was completed by Mr. Jones, it could be seen that it was not indicated how the legislation would be administered by USDA officials.

BETTER: We can see that Mr. Jones' analysis fails to show how USDA officials will administer the law.

6. Nominal compound. A nominal compound is a piling up of a series of nouns, which are then used like adjectives to modify another noun. Use of such nouns series, particularly in technical writing, often bewilders the reader. Substitute prepositional phrases for some of the modifying nouns.

POOR: Production unit ownership arrangement alterations might change the structure of U.S. agriculture.

BETTER: Changes in the ownership arrangements of farms might alter the structure of U.S. agriculture.

7. Jargon. Jargon is highly specialized—and often overblown—language used to complicate and impress. Shun jargon; avoid gobbledegook. If you need to use a highly technical term, define it first.

POOR: The 1981 legislation represents an attempt to resolve differences between micro- and macroeconomic concerns, problems which are based on the internal dynamics of the agricultural sector and on conflicts among social goals and values.

BETTER: The 1981 act represents an attempt to integrate the individual goals of producers and consumers with the goals of the society as a whole.

8. Wordiness. Write concisely; make each word work. Use short and simple words wherever possible. Avoid nouns ending in -ness, -ment, -tion, and -ility.

POOR: The implementation of these guidelines should be accomplished immediately.

BETTER: Implement these guidelines now.

Write as clearly as you can. This principle does not mean you should compromise the complexity and precision of your findings. It does mean that you should express your thoughts as simply and clearly as possible given the technical level of your material and your intended audience. The basic function of language is to communicate.

Increasing Impact

We recommend that you use the following three standards to achieve greater impact in your writing:

- Economy of expression—say what you mean in the fewest words.
- Directness of expression—use the best words to make your point, without resorting to circumlocutions or euphemisms.
- Forcefulness of expression—identify clearly who is doing the action, what they are doing, and to whom (or what).

For the greatest clarity and, hence, the greatest impact on your readers, increase the number of one-syllable words and avoid long sentences in overly long paragraphs. Substitute short words for longer ones; for example, “use” is a

clearer and more economical word than “utilization.” Even the most learned of your readers will react negatively to a steady stream of complex words in complex sentences. An overworked reader will simply tune out.

Use concrete nouns, rather than general or abstract ones. For example, if you are discussing lettuce, you may mislead your readers by referring to it as “produce.” Precise nouns call forth pictures; imprecise ones provoke only mental blurs. The general term, “produce,” can mean a multitude of things you do not mean, such as corn, peas, and beans. More precision can help the reader avoid a mental succotash. Furthermore, reduce the number of adjectives. One exact noun, like “lettuce,” works far better than an imprecise one modified by a barrage of adjectives, like “a green, leafy vegetable, often uncooked, and frequently used in salads.” The latter expression merely presents to the reader a dizzying array of other possibilities—endive, escarole, and romaine.

Recognize that the verb is generally the most powerful word in a sentence. Therefore, let it carry the weight of the sentence. Use verb forms instead of nouns whenever possible. Prefer strong verb constructions, especially transitive active verbs, to weaker ones, especially passive verbs. The following list shows the declining order of strength for verbs:

Transitive:	The director fired the writer.
Intransitive:	The director agonized over the decision.
Linking:	The writer was sad.
Passive:	The writer was fired.

Reduce the use of the verb “to be” in all its forms (is, was, will be, has been, had been, will have been, and so forth). Employ the verb “to have” in all its forms only rarely. Shun conditional constructions (might, could, and should); do not interject these hedge words indiscriminately to avoid assuming responsibility for your statements. Avoid overworked verbs, such as “occur” and “characterize.”

Avoid false sentence starts, such as “there are...,” “it would appear that...,” and “indications are that....” Get to your point immediately.

Subordinate the words in your sentences properly. Put the most important ideas in the independent, or main, clause, and relegate the less important ideas to dependent, or subordinate, clauses. Your reader will thereby gain a more lasting impression of those concepts you regard as most critical.

Start all paragraphs with a topic sentence. Make each paragraph a microcosm of the inverted pyramid (see p. 5), presenting the most important idea first, followed by related or subordinate ideas. Make most paragraphs four to eight sentences long. Longer paragraphs tend to tire most readers. Use short paragraphs principally for transition, summary, or emphasis.

If you follow these tips on writing, you will eliminate the major hazards to clear expression and you will hold the attention of your readers. These guidelines will enable you to develop a more critical eye and ear. However, no matter how accomplished a writer you become, you will need to review and revise constantly. That is, you must learn to become your own editor.

Two widely used handbooks on good writing that you may want to consult are *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White (New York: Macmillan, 1979), and *The Careful Writer: A Modern Guide to English Usage*, by Theodore M. Bernstein (New York: Atheneum, 1965).

Manuscript Format

Your agency has specific manuscript format requirements. New employees and those accustomed to other styles of publication—whether in another agency, the private sector, or a university—will find the guidelines in this section especially useful. Your attention to these mechanics will help your manuscript move through the editing process more quickly.

Headings

Headings should be concise and informative. As in titles, put the most important words at the beginning. Chapter 5 in this manual, “Preparing the Camera Copy for Research Monographs,” explains how to type headings for your manuscript.

Text

Double space all copy of the typed manuscript, including the abstract, keywords, preface, foreword, acknowledgments, contents, summary, body of the report, references, appendixes, and text and table footnotes. Only the data within the body of your tables should be single-spaced.

Number the pages consecutively, including all tables and charts. Indent paragraphs within the text five spaces, and indent the first line of all footnotes (including those in your tables) two spaces.

Manuscripts should be neatly typed. Minor corrections may be made in pencil, but pages with extensive changes should be retyped. Do not use staples or paper clips to attach changes or inserts to a manuscript page. Type all changes or inserts on a separate sheet of paper, and indicate clearly where the material should appear.

Footnotes

Number text footnotes consecutively, beginning with the first footnote in the body of the manuscript. Summaries and other frontmatter do not contain footnotes. But, appendix footnotes may be numbered in a sequence which is separate from those in the body of the report. Double space all footnotes, and place them at the bottom of the page on which they are referenced. Keep footnotes concise and use them sparingly.

Quotations

Short quotations may be enclosed within quotation marks and run in with the text. Quotations that are 50 words or longer should be single spaced, but a double space should be placed above and below the quoted material. Indent such quotations five spaces from both left and right margins of the manuscript text.

Tables

Well-designed and properly prepared tables can be a vital part of your report. Tables present data that support the text in an orderly fashion so that readers

can more easily understand the relationships among these data. A good table highlights relationships among data and summarizes specific points.

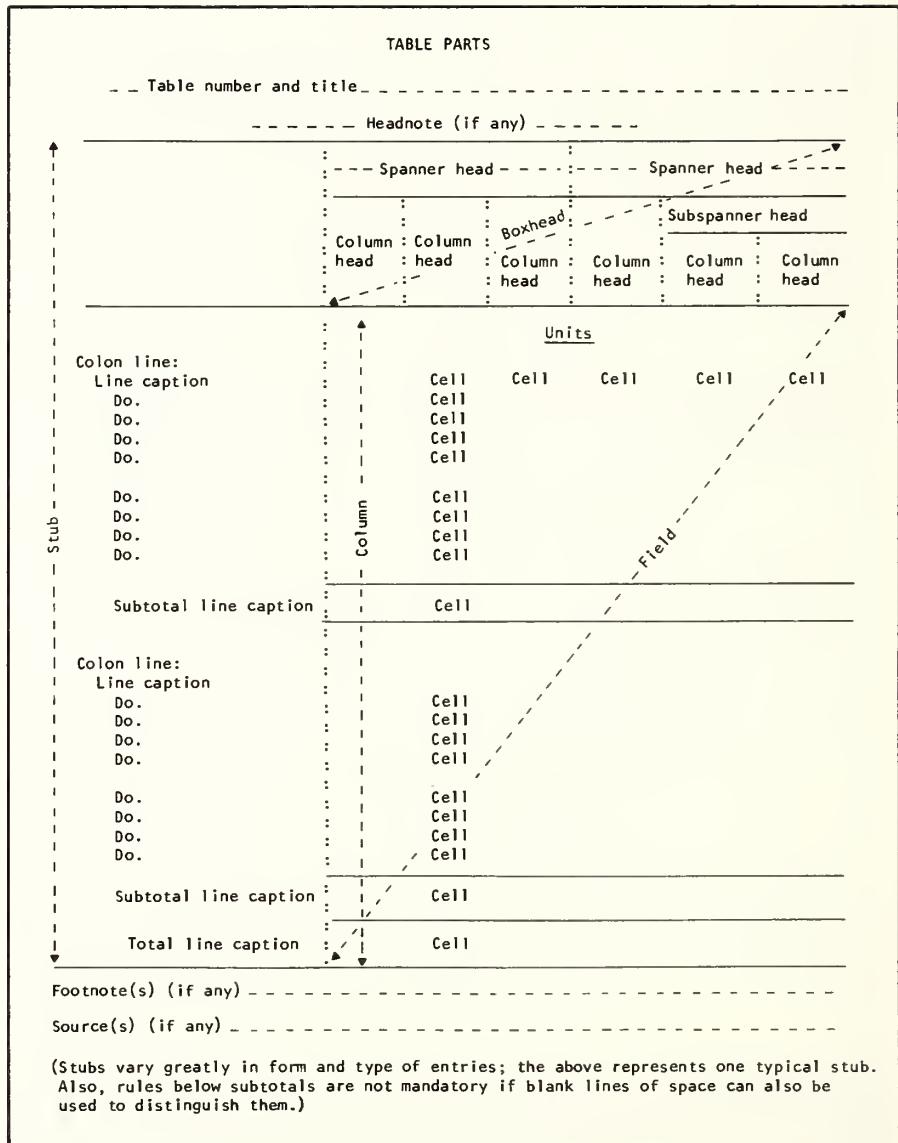
Designing Tables. To communicate clearly with tables, apply the following principles as you design them:

- **Each table should be necessary.** Do not use a table unless it will actually help the reader understand a specific point. Voluminous tables are usually distracting. Be sure that your tables do not repeat one another.
- **Each table should stand on its own merit.** Include all information required, but nothing extra. Your reader should not have to refer to the text to understand the table. Use your text to bring to the reader's attention only the most vital comparisons you want to make.
- **Each table should be clear and concise.** Do not add unnecessary information to fill up space. A small table often works better than a large one because the reader can better understand and remember the salient features of your data. Be sure to round off numbers consistently. That is, if you round one number, round all the others, and be sure to round each figure after the decimal to the same number of places.
- **Each table should agree with the text.** Make sure your data in the tables agree with the data and message of the text. If your data do not agree, your reader may question the accuracy of other parts of your report.
- **Use the same wording in both tables and text.** Changing the wording can change the meaning; and if not the meaning, then your reader's understanding of what you mean. Choose the most appropriate wording, and stick with it.

Preparing Tables. Do not submit handwritten tables for editorial review. Construct tables in the vertical format whenever possible. Wide, shallow tables constructed horizontally (placed sideways on the page) can often be made more legible by reversing the stub and boxheads to achieve a vertical format. (For a diagram of the principal parts of a table, see this page.)

To minimize the amount of editing and to speed publication of the report, follow these directions on formatting tables:

- **Numbers.** Tables should be numbered consecutively throughout the body of the report. Tables should be placed as close to their text references as possible. Appendix tables should be numbered consecutively throughout the appendix section of your report—for example, appendix table 1, appendix table 2, and so on—even though you may have more than one appendix. The table number is followed by two dashes and the title.
- **Titles.** Titles should be brief and clear. Never use more than two lines in the title, and center each line of the title on the table width. Titles should answer the questions: what, where, and when? Be sure to distinguish calendar years from split years; identify split years as fiscal, crop, or marketing years in the title or in a footnote. Only the first word in a title is capitalized, except for proper nouns and the word immediately following a colon. Do not use a period at the end of a table title.
- **Stubs.** The stubhead contains a description of the contents of the stub (the far left column of a table): year, commodity, country of origin, State, crop, and so forth. If the contents of the stub vary greatly, the word "item" may be used. Leaders (typewritten periods) are unnecessary if the rows are easy to follow. To help the reader comprehend the data more readily, divide the stubs into groups of 5, 8, 10, or 12 by leaving a space between the groups.



- **Boxheads.** Wording in the boxheads (categories appearing across the top of a table) should be as brief as possible. Only the first word is capitalized, except for words that are capitalized in the text. No periods are used. Phrasing of headings for comparable columns should be consistent. Two or more columns with similar descriptive headings should be grouped under a common designation that spans the relevant columns.
- **Fields.** The field is the area of the table where the data are actually presented. Each data cell in the field should have an entry; if no data appear for items in a table, use dashes, zeros, or "NA" (not available or not applicable), and explain in a footnote what these dashes or abbreviations mean.
- **Units.** Units of measure are centered and underlined over the column or columns in the data field to which these units apply. If more than one unit is used and if any of these units applies to several adjacent columns, center the units and add dashes to each side over the relevant columns. Do not use dashes if one unit applies to the entire table. Units can also be placed in a separate unit column if the stub entry units vary a great deal.
- **Footnotes.** Notes, footnotes, and sources should be arranged in that order below the bottom rule of the table. The first line of each note is indented two spaces; all other lines are typed flush left. Footnotes explain or qualify an item in the table. In titles, stubs, and boxheads, place footnote references at the end of the wording; within the field, place footnote references to the left of the numbers. Number footnote references consecutively across the table, left to right.
- **Source notes.** Source notes appear below the footnotes. A source note gives the origin of the statistical information in a table. It recognizes the person or organization that originally obtained, compiled, or released the data, enabling readers to contact the originator of the data.

The sample below shows a correctly typed table.

Table 16--Mill consumption of wool in selected countries, 1967-69 1/							
Country			Percentage				Percentage
	1967	1968	1967 to 1968	1968	1969	change	
<hr/>							
		- Million pounds -		Percent	- Million pounds -		Percent
Australia	76	73	-4		16	NA	NA
Europe:							
Belgium	80	88	+10		22	24	+11
France	235	257	+10		68	82	+20
Italy	218	211	-3		52	52	0
Netherlands	20	18	-12		4	5	+9
United Kingdom	360	391	+9		103	105	+2
West Germany	122	149	+21		38	37	-5
Japan	381	399	+5		94	99	+5
United States 2/	312	330	+6		86	82	-4
Total	1,805	1,916	+6		3/466	3/488	3/+5
NA = Not available.							
1/ Clean content.							
2/ Consumption on woolen and worsted systems only.							
3/ Excludes Australia for comparison purposes.							
Sources: U.S. data from Bureau of the Census; other data from reports of Commonwealth Secretariat.							

Charts

Charts can effectively communicate certain types of statistical information, such as trends over time. A well-designed chart can reveal the message more clearly than can text or tables alone for the following reasons: (1) most people can more easily grasp and remember information presented in pictures than in words; (2) charts can clarify a complex problem by simplifying great masses of numerical detail; and (3) charts can bring out hidden relationships and can stimulate, as well as facilitate, analytical thinking.

All charts should be able to stand alone. They must, therefore, be designed to attract and hold attention. The following steps will help you present your statistical data more clearly and dramatically:

- Determine the most important message in the data, and design your chart to convey that message.
- Get to know all types of charts—line, pie, surface, map, and bar—and make the best selection for your message.
- Refer to the ERS annual *Handbook of Agricultural Charts* for ideas. You can use some of these charts directly as camera copy for your reports, thus saving time and money.

Most charts for reports published by ERS and SRS are prepared professionally by USDA designers or by outside artists on contract. Some computer-prepared charts may be suitable for camera copy. Check with an editor to be sure. Hand-drawn charts may not be used for published material.

Give detailed chart instructions when you submit your report for editing. You must submit plot data for all chartwork. Be sure that the data you select stress precisely what you want your chart to convey. You may either plot the data on blue-line chart forms or submit a rough layout with accompanying plot values. Typewritten data sheets are preferred, but pencil copy will be accepted if all numbers and words are legible. Submit only those data that will be plotted on the chart.

Equations

Use equations only when they help your readers understand the message in your text. If you have numerous, lengthy equations that are merely background, consider putting them in an appendix.

Indent each equation five spaces. Place the equation number flush right at the end of the last line of the equation. Space between operational signs for greater legibility. Be sure to vertically align all equal signs. Be sure each equation element is explained and use that element to represent the same concept throughout your report.

Brand Names

You may acknowledge a company that has cooperated in your research or has made an important contribution by providing data. However, as USDA policy is to avoid the appearance of direct or indirect advertising, avoid references to specific commercial enterprises and brand names in your manuscript text. When reference to a specific commercial enterprise is unavoidable, the publication must carry the following disclaimer: “Use of brand names (or company names) in this publication is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.”

Copyrighted Material

If you want to reproduce tables, charts, photographs, or long quotations from a copyrighted document (for example, a privately published trade journal) in your report, you must obtain written permission from the holder of the copyright. U.S. Government publications, in contrast, are considered to have entered the public domain; therefore, you may use any such source materials by simply citing the reference (See p. 23 on references for instructions.)

Pesticide Precautionary Statement

USDA publications containing research on pesticides must carry a precautionary statement about safe use, and it must be accompanied by USDA's official pesticide symbol. The precautionary statement and the official pesticide symbol often appear on the back cover of the report, as follows:



Use Pesticides Safely
FOLLOW THE LABEL

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

THIS PUBLICATION REPORTS RESEARCH INVOLVING PESTICIDES. IT DOES NOT CONTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEIR USE, NOR DOES IT IMPLY THAT THE USES DISCUSSED HERE HAVE BEEN REGISTERED. ALL USES OF PESTICIDES MUST BE REGISTERED BY APPROPRIATE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCIES BEFORE THEY CAN BE RECOMMENDED.

CAUTION: PESTICIDES CAN BE INJURIOUS TO HUMANS, DOMESTIC ANIMALS, DESIRABLE PLANTS, AND FISH OR OTHER WILDLIFE—IF THEY ARE NOT HANDLED OR APPLIED PROPERLY. USE ALL PESTICIDES SELECTIVELY AND CAREFULLY. FOLLOW RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PESTICIDES AND PESTICIDE CONTAINERS.

GPO Style

The U.S. Government has its own style requirements designed to make all its publications consistent. These requirements are spelled out in the *U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual* (GPO Style Manual). A manuscript that is close to GPO style when submitted to the Information Division can be edited, revised, retyped, and published more quickly. The most useful and frequently consulted sections of the GPO Style Manual include those on punctuation, abbreviations, capitalization, numerals, and compounding.

Punctuation

1. In a series, a comma is placed before “and.”
wheat, corn, and rice
2. The comma is omitted between the month and year in a date.
October 1978
However, a comma is used to separate the day from the year.
October 25, 1978
3. When excerpts from a passage are quoted, three periods are used to indicate an ellipsis; a fourth period is used to indicate the end of a sentence.
Costs of production increased. . . and consumer prices rose by a greater percentage. . . .
4. Commas and periods are always placed inside quotation marks. Other punctuation marks are placed inside quotation marks only if they are part of the material quoted.

Smith published an interesting article, “Agricultural Planning in Burma.”

Have you seen Smith’s article on “Agricultural Planning in Burma”?

Abbreviations

1. The abbreviation “U.S.” is used for United States when it is an adjective, but not when it is a noun.
U.S. farms
wheat exported by the United States

2. Abbreviations (except common country abbreviations such as U.S. and USSR) must be identified the first time they appear.

gross national product (GNP)

Agency for International Development (AID)

extra long staple (ELS) cotton

3. Latin abbreviations should not be used in U.S. Government publications. The following English translations should be substituted:

that is	. . . for	i.e.
for example		e.g.
compare		c.f.
namely		viz.
and others, and so forth		etc. (for things)
and others		et al. (for persons)

4. Abbreviate names of States when used with a city, town, county, or parish; otherwise spell the names out. Use standard State abbreviations (such as "Calif.") in the text and ZIP code abbreviations (such as CA) for mailing addresses only. Refer to the GPO Style Manual (p. 151) for both sets of abbreviations.

Numerals

1. Numbers one through nine are generally spelled out. Numbers from 10 up appear as numerals.

2. The following cases are exceptions to the "one through nine" rule:

Units of measure, time, and money require the numeral.

5 tons, 7 acres, 2 inches, 3 weeks, 8 years, 2 cents

Exceptions: one gross, two decades, three centuries

All percentages require the numeral.

2 percent, 0.5 percent

Within a single sentence, groups of numbers referring to the same subject require the numeral if any of those numbers is 10 or more.

Of the 50 farm families in the survey, only 3 had severe transportation problems.

3. Numbers with four or more digits require the comma—even in tables (except for computer-generated tables).

1,000; 25,000; 400,000

4. In the text of a report, 1 million is preferred to 1,000,000; however, 1,000 is used rather than 1 thousand.

Capitalization

Here are some of the most common cases where capitals are—or are not—used:

1. Capitalize proper names and their derivatives (except those with acquired independent meanings, such as brussels sprouts or pasteurized milk).
2. Capitalize common nouns and adjectives in proper names forming an essential part of a proper name, but do not capitalize a common noun used alone as a substitute.

Food and Agriculture Act of 1977, the act

Hoover Dam, the dam

Arlington County, the county

3. Capitalize names of national governmental units.

U.S. Congress, but congressional

Department of Agriculture, the Department; SRS, the Agency; Natural Resource Economics Division, the Division; but departments, agencies, and divisions

Bureau of the Census, the Bureau

American Embassy, but the consulate general

Capitalize names of international organizations.

United Nations, the Council, the Assembly, the Secretariat

World Food Conference, the Conference

4. Capitalize names of countries and administrative divisions.

United States, the Nation, the Government, the Federal Government, but a nation dedicated to economic growth

Capitalize Government when it refers to the Federal Government of a country; but not when it refers to several governments or to State or local governments.

Capitalize Federal, but lowercase federally.

Use Nation when referring to the United States, but nationwide and national.

Always capitalize State when referring to the U.S. States, and capitalize Province when referring to the Canadian Provinces.

5. Capitalize names of regions and localities.

the Midwest
the Deep South
the Middle East
Eastern Europe

6. Do not capitalize descriptive terms used to denote direction.

eastern Pennsylvania
central Europe

7. Capitalize titles of publications, documents, acts, and laws.

Journal of Agricultural Economics
The New York Times Magazine, but *Newsweek* magazine
Executive Order No. 24, but an executive order
Constitution, but the first amendment
Pure Food and Drug Act, but the act

8. Do not capitalize references to parts of publications.

volume 2, but Volume 2 when part of a title
table 9
figure 1
chapter 3

Compounding

1. Words with the following short prefixes are generally printed solid:

anti	antipollution	non	nonproductive
bi	binational	para	paramutual
co	coauthor	post	postwar
de	desegregate	pre	prerevolutionary
extra	extraterritorial	pro	proactive
inter	interagency	re	reintroduce
multi	multinational	semi	semiautonomous
neo	neocolonial	un	uneconomical

2. Compounds with the following suffixes are usually printed solid, especially when the prefixed word consists of one syllable:

fold	fourfold	owner	homeowner
grower	wheatgrower	wide	worldwide
land	cropland	worker	farmworker
maker	policymaker	writer	speechwriter

3. The following words occur frequently in agricultural writing:

feed grain (as noun and as unit modifier)	long-term (as unit modifier)
farmland	price index
forest land	price-support (as unit modifier)
long run (as noun)	set-aside
longrun (as unit modifier)	sugar beet
longer run (as noun and as unit modifer)	sugarcane

Check the GPO Style Manual (pp. 73-130) for further instructions on compound words, especially for those words that appear often in your report.

Sexist Language

The use of sexist language, or discriminatory language based on gender, is unacceptable in USDA publications for two reasons: (1) it is contrary to U.S. Government style regulations and (2) it is frequently imprecise or inaccurate. Therefore, when you write for publication, you need to become sensitive to this type of linguistic stereotyping and avoid it.

Although expressions such as “the dairyman” or “the researcher and his colleagues” are familiar and consequently sound natural to many ears, they are not acceptable usage in official publications.

Three techniques will help you avoid sexist language; the one you select as most suitable will depend on the context. First, replace the gender-specific noun with a neutral one. A few examples may help:

dairyman	dairy farmer
congressmen	members of the Congress
manpower	work force
man hours	staff hours, work hours
men (including males and females)	people

Second, replace the single noun and its corresponding gender pronoun with either a plural noun and pronoun or an impersonal one. For example:

POOR: When a researcher reports her results, she must suit the technical level of her writing to her audience.

BETTER: When researchers report their results, they must suit the technical level of their writing to their audience.

POOR: When a person applies for a secretarial job, he must be prepared to type complicated tables and complex equations.

BETTER: Anyone applying for a secretarial job must be prepared to type complicated tables and complex equations.

Third, when you must refer to an unknown individual—whose sex is, therefore, also unknown to you—recast the entire sentence:

POOR: When J. Q. Doe published his analysis of pesticide demand, many of his readers reacted with skepticism.

BETTER: The analysis of pesticide demand published by J. Q. Doe provoked much skepticism.

If you practice these three techniques, avoiding sexist language will become semiautomatic. It will seem as natural to you as avoiding ungrammatical constructions or following the rules in the GPO Style Manual.

References

Literature citations generally appear in a separate reference section—or bibliography—at the end of a research report. However, when a report refers to six or fewer data sources, it is preferable to use footnotes placed at the bottom of the page where cited. The style for references listed in a bibliography differs from that for references which appear as footnotes. Both styles will be described.

Bibliographies

The information source is identified in the text by an underscored number in parentheses that corresponds to the full citation listed alphabetically according to author's last name (or the publisher) at the end of the report. The following explanatory footnote should be added the first time a literature citation number is used in the text:

Underscored (or italicized) numbers in parentheses refer to literature cited at the end of this report.

Although several bibliographic forms are generally recognized as correct, the author must select only one for a given report and use it consistently throughout the bibliography. (The sample bibliography on pp. 24-26 gives examples of most types of items cited by ERS and SRS authors.) The following instructions indicate the preferred style for ERS and SRS reports.

Author's name. The author's surname comes first, followed by a comma, first name, and middle initial, followed by a period (13). (These numerals refer to items in the accompanying sample bibliography.)

If there are two or three authors for the same document, the order for both the second and third authors is first name, middle initial, and surname (4). When there are four or more authors, only the senior author's name need be given, followed by "and others," not *et al.* (11).

When two or more works by the same author are referenced, a short line of underscoring (usually 15-character spaces) is used to indicate repetition of the author's name (8). When a second work by the same author also has a coauthor, this underscoring is followed by a comma, first name, middle initial, and surname of the coauthor, followed by a period.

The publisher's name appears in the author's place when there is no author indicated in the document (23). If the publisher is not only the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but also the Economic Research Service and the National Economics Division, the name of the Agency and the Division should follow that of the Department (24).

Title of document. The titles of books, journals, periodicals, and reports separately published are underscored and followed by a period. Article titles are placed in quotes before the publication title, with a comma before the final quote (9). Publication titles are always spelled out, never abbreviated.

If the document is a Ph.D. dissertation or other type of unpublished work, this information should be indicated after the title and followed by a period (5, 20). Unpublished and uncleared ERS or SRS papers should not be cited as references.

Series identification. Series identifications are often used in Government and university publications. The series should be indicated after the title and followed by a period. A series identification is abbreviated (13). Articles in scholarly journals or periodicals are sometimes identified by both volume and series numbers. In this case, the underscored journal title is followed by a comma; the volume number in Roman numerals (followed by a comma) or Arabic numerals; the date in parentheses, followed by a comma; the specific page number without the abbreviation "p." or "pp.," followed by a period (9).

Place of publication. The city and State or foreign country (except for well-known cities) appear next, followed by a colon (2). It is not necessary to indicate Washington, D.C., as the place of publication when the document is a U.S. Government publication (13). The place of publication is not generally

Sample Bibliography

Type Preferred form

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING

(1) Baruch, Jordan J. "Statement of Science and Technology." Hearings before the Congressional Subcommittee on Science, Research, and Technology, U.S. Senate, Feb. 14, 1978.

EDITOR

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(28) Van Meir, Larry, and Sally Byrne. "Crop Highlights: Feed Grains," Agricultural Outlook. AO-82. U.S. Dept. Agr., Econ. Res. Serv., Nov. 1982, p. 6.

indicated when the document is a journal (9). It is not necessary to indicate the city of publication either for university publications, such as Ph.D. dissertations, or for reports appearing in departmental series, unless the university has more than one campus (6). However, the city of publication does appear for the publication of major university presses (16, 17).

Publisher. The publisher's name is followed by a comma. When the publisher's name appears in the place where the author's name would ordinarily appear, the publisher's name is not repeated after the title of the document. Note that the publisher's name is abbreviated when it appears in the publisher's place, but not when it appears in the author's place (13 vs 23). The publisher's name does not appear when journals are cited (9).

Date of publication. The date of publication is followed by a period if no page numbers are referenced; otherwise it is followed by a comma (13). All months except May, June, and July are abbreviated; no comma is placed between the month and year.

Page references. Specific page numbers that are referenced are the last item to appear in the citation. The abbreviation "p." is used to refer to one page and "pp." to refer to two or more pages (18).

Further designations (if applicable). If an individual author of an article in a larger work has been cited, the editor's name appears after the title of the book (2). However, if no individual author is cited—as for an anthology or collection of articles by different authors—the editor's name appears in the author's usual place, followed by the designation "ed." which appears in parentheses, followed by a period.

The translator's name likewise appears after the title, is abbreviated "trans." and is followed by a period.

The number of an edition appears after the title of a document (or name of editor or translator, if applicable) and is followed by a period. The ordinal number is followed by the abbreviation "ed." (16).

Footnotes

A footnote entry, unlike a bibliographic entry, is read as a single sentence; the elements are separated by commas or other internal punctuation, and the entry ends with a period.

Footnotes are placed at the bottom of the page where they are cited in the text. They may also be placed at the end of a chapter or of the complete text, but this procedure is not recommended.

The preferred footnote sequence is: Author (first name first), comma, title (and subtitle, separated by a colon), parenthesis, place of publication, colon, publisher, comma, date, parenthesis, comma, page references, period.

The following examples illustrate the essential differences in form between bibliographic and footnote citations:

Bibliography: Author name, reversed for alphabetizing. Title: Subtitle. Place of publication: Publisher, Date.

Sample: (3) Brown, Lester R., and Erik P. Echholm. By Bread Alone. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974.

Footnote: Author name in normal order, Title: Subtitle (Place of publication: Publisher, Date), pp. 1-10.

Sample: ¹Lester R. Brown and Erik P. Echholm, By Bread Alone (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), p. 5.

Chapter 4: Working with the Editor: Publication and Clearance Process

After you have written your first draft, many other steps in clearing and publishing your manuscript remain. The publication and clearance processes for research monographs, outlook and situation reports, and staff reports differ considerably. Publication and clearance procedures frequently change. If you encounter any differences between the procedures described in this chapter and the actual progress of your manuscript through publication, check with your editor or your division's publications coordinator for instructions.

Research Monographs

The Research Information Branch (RIB) has principal responsibility for publishing research monographs and for guiding them through the clearance process. A diagram showing the publication and clearance process for research monographs appears on this page. Following are the major steps in that process:

Step 1: Planning the research product. ERS researchers are required to submit a "Publication Proposal" for approval by the section head, branch chief, division director, the ERS Publications Committee, and the agency administrator before writing the manuscript draft (see p. 29). The forms are available in your division director's office; check with your division's publications coordinator for the exact procedure. A copy of the approved proposal must accompany any pre-edit or formal edit request sent to the Research Information Branch.

Step 2: Planning and writing the manuscript. Chapters 2 and 3 in this manual have already described the many facets of planning your report and of writing the manuscript draft. Although this step represents the major creative part of your work, many other tasks remain before your report can be published.

Step 3: Preliminary reviews of the manuscript draft. The preliminary review process is composed of three elements, which—under optimum circumstances—take place almost simultaneously:

Research Monographs: Publication and Clearance Steps

1. Publication proposal

Author

2. Planning and writing manuscript

Author

3. Preliminary review

Research Information Branch, author's division, outside agencies

4. Editing

Research Information Branch

5. Agency clearance

Author's division, Administrator, Research Information Branch

6. USDA clearance

USDA's Office of Information

7. Composition

Author's division or commercial firm

8. Preparation for printing

Research Information Branch

9. Printing and distribution

Government Printing Office/Research Information Branch

PUBLICATION PROPOSAL*

Title of Proposed Publication: _____

Author: _____ Phone: _____

Division: _____ Branch: _____ Section: _____

Type of Publication Proposed:

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Economics Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous Publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Information Bulletin	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural Development Res. Report
<input type="checkbox"/> Bibliography of Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical Bulletin
<input type="checkbox"/> ERS Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Bulletin
<input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Agricultural Economic Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____

Estimated manuscript length: _____ under 10 pages; _____ 10-30 pages; _____ over 30 pages

Briefly describe publication's contents:

Justification (Note publication's relation to current workplan or indicate other factors justifying publication in Department or ERS series. Indicate any legal or administrative mandates):

Initial below as appropriate:

	: Approved	: Approved with Changes (specify on back)	: Rejected	: Date
Section Head	:	:	:	:
Branch Chief	:	:	:	:
Division Director	:	:	:	:
Administrator	:	:	:	:

*Authors wishing to publish in ERS or Departmental series should complete this form before beginning work on their manuscripts. Finished manuscripts will be required to meet existing standards for content and writing and will continue to go through ERS-GPA review for that purpose. This form need not be completed for journal articles and staff reports.

A copy of this completed form should accompany the manuscript to editorial review in the EMS Information Division.

- **Pre-edit review** (highly recommended). Contact a member of the editorial staff and arrange to have your manuscript informally reviewed. If your manuscript has major flaws (in organization, focus, or style), you can discover these problems early when it is still relatively easy to make changes. A copy of the "Publication Proposal" (see step 1) must accompany the request for a pre-edit.
- **Peer review and division clearance** (essential). Whenever you publish anything through your agency, you must get clearance from your division. Research monographs generally receive peer review before clearance by the division; each division has its own procedures. A peer review by at least two other professionals in your field is generally required. The usual process is as follows: With the approval of the section leader, the author sends out the manuscript draft for technical review; the first reviewer is typically a member of the author's own branch, and the second reviewer is an outside reviewer (from another branch, government agency, or university). After this subject matter clearance, the section leader forwards the reviewed manuscript to the branch chief for approval and signature. The branch chief forwards the manuscript to the division director, who determines that the research is both valuable and publishable and who examines it for its priority within the division. The division director forwards the manuscript with an initialed AD-59 form and a copy of the approved "Publication Proposal" (see step 1) to the Research Information Branch where the manuscript is assigned for formal editing. If your research is to be released as a staff report, you may need only division clearance and a review by the chief of the Research Information Branch.
- **Interagency review** (if required). If you have discussed the programs of any other USDA agency or of any other department of the Federal Government, the designated clearance officer of that other agency or department must sign off on your manuscript. However, the principal reviewer will likely not be the actual clearance officer, but another subject matter specialist—perhaps your counterpart in the other organization. If you worked with someone in another agency during the planning and writing stage, have that person review the relevant portions of your first draft. Furthermore, give that person's name to the Informa-

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

MANUSCRIPT CLEARANCE

TO _____

Date _____

(Agency) _____

FROM _____

(Agency) _____

A manuscript entitled _____,
by _____, is enclosed for
official clearance by your agency, division, or branch. It is intended for
publication in _____. (Show publications series or name of periodical)
We believe the following persons will have particular interest in the subject
matter of this report:

Please return the manuscript with this form signed as soon as possible.
Comments, suggestions, or criticisms will be appreciated.

Indicate the viewpoint of your organization by checking one of the
statements below.

We have no comments, suggestions, or criticisms to offer on
this manuscript.

The attached comments are offered for consideration.
We () do want to review the manuscript again.

Signature _____
(Clearance Officer)

Date _____

Agency _____

Form AD-159 (August 1967) (Previous editions are obsolete)

tion Division at the time you submit your manuscript for formal editing. While your report is in the formal editing process (see step 4), your editor will send a copy of your manuscript with the necessary clearance form (see p. 30) to the appropriate clearance officer with the name of your contact who is already familiar with your research. If interdepartmental clearance is required, USDA's Office of Information (OI) will formally request it from the appropriate officer in the other department.

Step 4: Formal editing. Your division's publications coordinator will submit your manuscript to the Research Information Branch for editorial review and clearance. A copy of the "Publication Proposal" (see step 1) and an AD-59 initialed by your division director must accompany three double-spaced copies of the manuscript. The extra copies of the manuscript may be used for developing artwork for your report and for forwarding to other information outlets. (Your agency may occasionally disseminate your research results by feature articles in magazines or by radio and television spot announcements.) The editor assigned to your manuscript will contact you to discuss the publication schedule, the audience for your report, clearance, artwork, and other editorial issues. After the editor has completed a formal review of your manuscript (which will be much faster and simpler if you have already gotten a pre-edit), the manuscript will be returned to you for review. You and the editor will clarify any outstanding questions, and you will then provide a double-spaced clean copy of the edited manuscript. You may need to revise sections of the new draft and have them clean typed. (Simultaneously with the formal editing process, your editor will see that interagency clearance forms are sent to the appropriate clearance officers along with the reviewers' names you have already suggested. Your division managers may ask you to estimate costs of publishing your manuscript. Your editor can help you estimate costs for graphics, typesetting, printing, and distribution.

Step 5: Clearance package. Your editor will return the editorially approved copy of your manuscript with a clearance package—that is, with a cover memo (see p. 31) and the forms your research division must sign (see p. 32). These forms notify USDA that your agency has approved the manuscript for publication, that all interagency clearances are complete, and that the necessary funds have been obligated to typeset your manuscript in camera copy and print the final report. At this stage, your division director approves the final draft of your

manuscript and your distribution plan. (See pp. 40-41 for information on the distribution of research monographs.) No more than 1,000 free copies can be distributed unless a special approval is obtained from your agency administrator. The approved clearance package then goes to the Director of the EMS Information Division, who signs off on it and forwards it for USDA clearance. Your editor will reconfirm agency-level clearance (appearing on the "Publication Proposal" form) with the administrator.

Step 6: Departmental clearance. The Department's OI reviews your manuscript for policy, quality, and economy and for consistency with GPO style and USDA format requirements (discussed in the preceding chapter of this manual). OI ascertains that interagency clearances are complete. Your editor will also make "for sale" arrangements with OI, GPO, and NTIS.

Step 7: Composition (preparation of the camera copy). As soon as your manuscript receives official USDA clearance, the editorial staff will mark it for the typist or typesetter who will prepare the camera copy. Composition is prepared either inside your division on a typewriter or word processor or outside the Department by a commercial typesetter arranged through GPO contract. The type of composition appropriate to your report is determined by its series and by budget, time, and staff constraints. In either case, you will proofread the copy each time it passes through the composition process (galleys, page proofs, camera copy, and so forth).

Step 8: Preparation for printing. The editorial staff will lay out the camera copy and mark it for the printer. You will check the layout and ascertain that each page is letter perfect. This represents your last chance to make any changes; the camera copy you inspect is exactly what the printer's camera will photograph. Any error in it will appear in the published report.

Step 9: Printing and distribution. Your editor will send the camera copy to the printer. The editor will notify you when your report has been printed. You will check the printed report, but only for printer's errors, and then you will approve its release for distribution to your readers. Some research monographs are for sale from GPO; all are for sale in paper and microfiche from NTIS (see p. 40).

Cover Memo		
 United States Department of Agriculture	Economics Management Staff	Washington, D.C. 20250
Date:		
SUBJECT: Final clearance:		
TO:		
Your report is ready to be cleared by your division and we will then take it for departmental clearance. Please follow the instructions next to each checked box, then forward the entire package (made up of the AD-59, AD-700's, clearance copy of manuscript, distribution plans) to Ben Blankenship, Room 440 GHI.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>AD-700--Printing requisition for report</u> Have your administrative officer fill in lines 1 and 28-29, and sign at bottom.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>AD-700--Cold type composition requisition</u> Have your administrative officer fill in lines 1 and 28-29, and sign at bottom.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>AD-700--Printing requisition for summary</u> Have your administrative officer fill in lines 1 and 28-29, and sign at bottom.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Report distribution plan</u> Please review and indicate needed changes.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Summary distribution plan</u> Please review and indicate needed changes.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>AD-59--Agency clearance</u> Have your director sign on the top line of block 26.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Forward the entire package (made up of the AD-59, AD-700's, clearance copy of manuscript, distribution plans) to Ben Blankenship, room 440 GHI.		
Thanks,		
Editor: Research Information Branch 447-7305		

PROCUREMENT REQUEST			TO (Procurement Office)						I REQUESTING OFFICE		
INSTRUCTIONS - Agencies must provide entries in unshaded areas. See reverse.											
2 RECEIVING OFFICE NO	3 CONTRACT NUMBER (If Applicable)	4 ORDER DATE	5 UNIT CODE	6 FUNC CODE	7 PURCHASE/DELIVERY ORDER NUMBER	8 SUB	9 1A PROCUREMENT REQUEST NO	10 1B DATE			
CHECK ONE			10 TO: (Seller)						11 SHIP TO: (Consignee and Destination)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Purchase Order <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery Order									<input type="checkbox"/> INSIDE DELIVERY REQUESTED		
12 LINE ITEM	13 ACT CODE	14 DESCRIPTION				15 BUDGET OBJECT	16 ACC. LINE	17 QUANTITY	18 UNIT ISSUE	19 UNIT PRICE	20 AMOUNT
For additional information, please contact											
TECHNICAL CONTACT				TELEPHONE NO							
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23 REQUIRED DELIVERY (Do not use ASAP)		24 NEGOTIATED DELIVERY		24 SHIP VIA				26 ESTIMATED FREIGHT		TOTAL ►	
										30 DISTRIBUTION	
28 ACT LINE		29 ACCOUNTING CLASSIFICATION								31 AMOUNT	
-2		A 5 B 10		C 3 D 4 E 1 F 2							
RECOMMENDED SOURCE(S) (If necessary, use attachment)											
I certify that the above items are necessary for use in the public service											
TITLE _____											
SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE											

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE		1. Agency	2. Date
REQUEST FOR MANUSCRIPT REVIEW (See reverse side for instructions)		3. <input type="checkbox"/> Initial request <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental	4. Agency No.
5. Manuscript title		6. Series	7. No. copies
9. Brief description of contents		8. <input type="checkbox"/> Check box if self-mailer is to be used. If not, explain why under "REMARKS."	
10. Need for and timeliness of this publication			11. Requested delivery date
12. Manuscript			
<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Supersedes		<input type="checkbox"/> Revision <input type="checkbox"/> Slight revision <input type="checkbox"/> Reprint	
13. Paper Stock		14. Trim Size	
Text _____ Cover _____		X _____	
16. Ink Color		15. Est. printed pages	
Text _____ Cover _____		Halftones _____ Line Drawings _____	
18. Reproduction		19. Composition	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dept. plant <input type="checkbox"/> GPO <input type="checkbox"/> Contract via GPO <input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> GPO <input type="checkbox"/> DSO <input type="checkbox"/> Contract via GPO <input type="checkbox"/> Agency	
20. <input type="checkbox"/> Hold reproducibles _____ months <input type="checkbox"/> Return negatives to agency		21. Recommended sale by Superintendent of Documents (see reverse, item 10) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
22. Items enclosed			
<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript <input type="checkbox"/> Data for charts <input type="checkbox"/> Camera copy <input type="checkbox"/> AD-652 <input type="checkbox"/> AD-155 <input type="checkbox"/> Labels <input type="checkbox"/> Illustrations <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary art <input type="checkbox"/> Material for cover page <input type="checkbox"/> AD-78 <input type="checkbox"/> AD-156			
23. Manuscript cleared by the following agencies, and their comments, if any are attached			
24. REMARKS		25. For use by Office of Communication	
		Received _____ Date _____	
26. I certify that publication of this manuscript in the quantity and form requested is essential to the official business of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and that it has been prepared to meet exacting standards of economy and effectiveness. If a reprint, I certify text, references, and illustrations are up to date.			
Agency Publications Control Officer			Date
27. Manuscript <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Approved pending action on the following:			

Outlook and Situation Reports

The Current Information and Popular Publications Branch has principal responsibility for publishing outlook and situation reports. These reports require formal review and approval by the World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB). Outlook and situation reports are not subject to regular USDA policy and editorial clearance for two reasons: (1) to protect the market-sensitive contents and (2) to expedite publication. Clearance responsibilities are delegated to ERS and WAOB and take place simultaneously with publication procedures.

Because outlook and situation reports are quick-turnaround publications, their publication procedures are far more condensed than those for research monographs. These reports, except for annual releases and the *Agricultural Outlook* report, are generally limited to 32 pages.

The procedures described here, current at the time of publication, will change as ERS carries out its program to improve the design, content, and quality of outlook and situation reports. The process will entail close involvement by a managing editor from the Information Division at each publication stage.

A diagram showing the publication and clearance process for outlook and situation reports appears on this page.

Step 1: Writing the first draft. The appropriate program area is responsible for developing the first draft. Approximately 10 days prior to the scheduled WAOB clearance meeting, copies of the draft are submitted for review to ERS and WAOB specialists and to appropriate persons in the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, the Agricultural Marketing Service, and the Foreign Agricultural Service.

Step 2: Editing the report. An editor manages the text through the first and second drafts, the WAOB meeting, and the review of the final camera copy. The author receives all suggested changes on the first draft from the topic specialists and the editor within 2 working days. The author has 2 more days to

Outlook and Situation Reports: Publication and Clearance Steps

1. Draft report and summary
Responsible program area

2. Preliminary review
Members of interagency board

3. Editing
Current Information and Popular Publications Branch

4. Prepare second draft
Responsible program area

5. Clearance Assistant Secretary for Economics/
World Agricultural Outlook Board

Release summary to public
Press release, computer network

6. Composition
Computer Publishing Center, program area

7. Printing and distribution Government Printing Office/
Current Information and Popular Publications Branch

reconcile these changes and incorporate them into a second draft that is delivered to the Assistant Secretary for Economics, the Chairman of WAOB, the ERS Deputy Administrator, the EMS Information Director, the USDA Information Director, and appropriate specialists in ERS, WAOB, and other agencies. The editor again reviews the text. The author receives all changes no later than the afternoon preceding the scheduled morning meeting of WAOB.

Step 3: Preparing the summary. The author develops a one-page summary, including significant tables. This material is transmitted after editing to WAOB and the Assistant Secretary for Economics on the afternoon before the WAOB meeting. The ERS Administrator and Deputy Administrator also receive copies of the summary. Immediately following the WAOB meeting, which constitutes official USDA clearance of the manuscript, the author and editor reconcile changes to both the report and summary. The Current Information and Popular Publications Branch transmits the summary to USDA's News Center by 1:30 p.m. for duplication and release at 3:00 p.m. when commodity markets close. The national DIALCOM, Martin/Marietta, and AGNET computer information systems receive copies of the summary, which can then be accessed by subscribers. A copy of the summary is also transmitted to WAOB by 3:00 p.m.; the Assistant Secretary for Economics receives it by special messenger.

Step 4: Correcting and proofreading the report. The program area is responsible for making final corrections in the report and for providing error-free Lexitron or Wang discs to the Computer Publishing Center (CPC). The CPC applies coding and transmits the material to USDA's photo-composition unit for the preparation of camera copy. The CPC also puts the full report, plus tables, into the AGNET computer system.

Step 5: Preparing the camera copy. The Information Division pastes up the camera copy, including text, tables, charts, and other items. The editor will work with the author to assure that the final material meets all USDA and ERS standards. However, the author is responsible for determining that the camera copy is error-free.

Step 6: Printing the report. The author takes the camera copy, printing requisition, distribution scheme (developed earlier by the Current Information and Popular Publications Branch), and a set of CPC-prepared mailing labels for distributing free copies to the EMS printing specialist. Copies are usually available from the printer within 7-10 days after the WAOB meeting.

Step 7: Distributing the report. No more than 1,000 copies are distributed free. Principal recipients are the news media, university libraries, heads of agricultural economics departments, members of the Congress, embassies, and other clients that the authors have identified as necessary recipients. GPO rides the printing order to cover paying subscribers; other agencies interested in having bulk copies must ride the order and pay for their copies. NTIS sells microfiche and paper copies and archives the report.

Staff Reports

Staff reports (see p. 2) resemble research reports in their organization. The list of the major elements of a research report and the guide to outlining in chapter 2 apply equally to staff reports. Check with your division's publications officer or the Chief of the Research Information Branch (EMS) for special review, clearance, editing, format, printing, and distribution instructions.

Chapter 5: Preparing the Camera Copy for Research Monographs

Camera copy is the material photographed for printing. It can be produced in two basic ways: (1) within your division on a typewriter or word processor or (2) outside the Department by a commercial typesetter who is contracted by GPO. The process of preparing camera copy—whether inside or outside—is called composition.

The author has major responsibility for proofreading the copy and reviewing corrections, whatever the type of composition.

Agency-Prepared Camera Copy

If the camera copy is prepared by your agency, it is typed on blue-line paper on a word processor in your division. If a manuscript is typed in the field, a word processor may not be available, and a typist will prepare the copy on a standard office typewriter. In either case, the typist will follow detailed format instructions, or specifications (also called specs), from the Research Information Branch.

Agency typists and authors play an essential role in preparing the camera copy. Together, you are responsible for making sure that the copy is letter perfect.

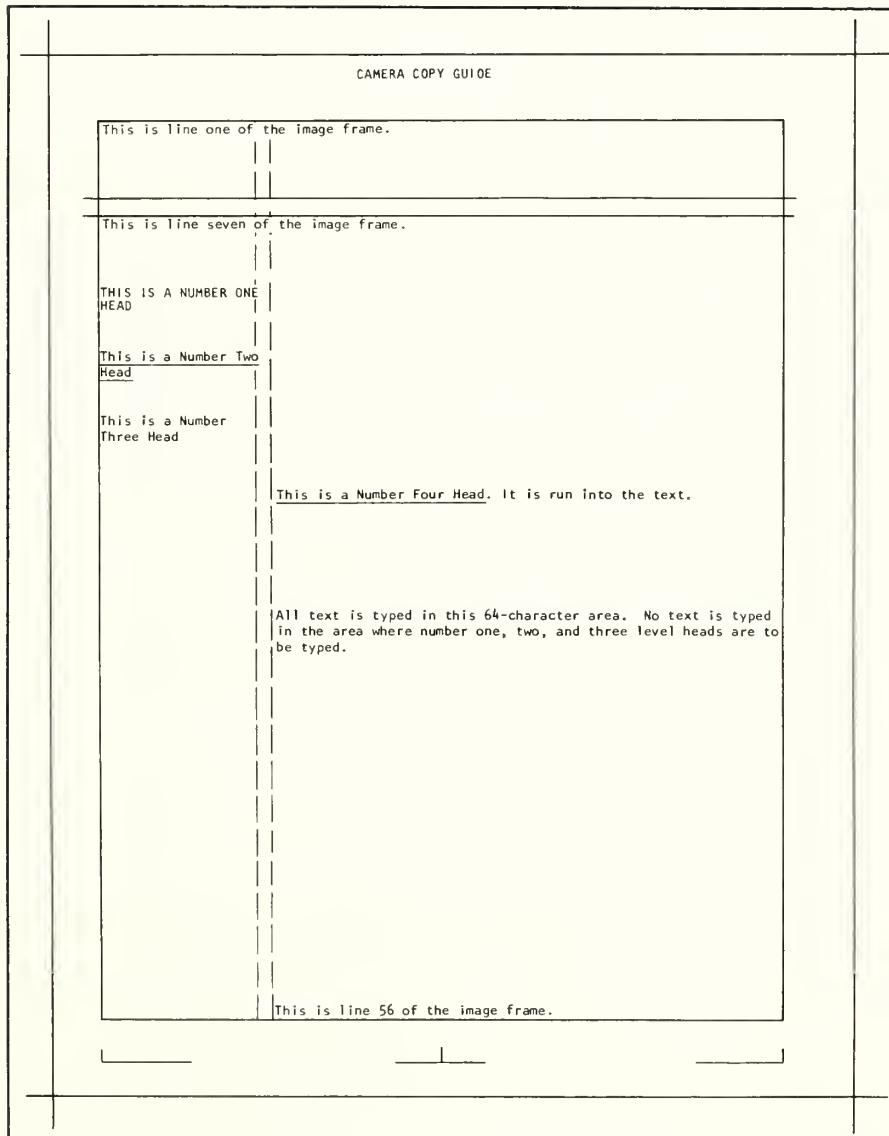
Camera copy must be clean. Camera copy will actually be photographed as part of the printing process; therefore, typists must be sure all copy is free of erasures, smudgy type, broken letters, stray marks, and dirt.

Type all text and tables on blue-line camera copy paper, which can be ordered through the ERS central supply office or obtained directly from the editor. These guide sheets come in different sizes, for “same size” reproduction and for various amounts of reduction.

The editorial staff will mark the edited manuscript for composition. The guidelines in the next section apply to most manuscripts produced within the division. However, an editor might give somewhat different instructions for a particular manuscript; if so, the editor’s instructions should be followed.

Read the following instructions before you type any camera copy, and look through the edited manuscript for additional instructions. Look for half-page tables and charts in the report; they should be placed on the same page with the text. These instructions are for standard-size, single-column format; the image size is $7\frac{1}{8}$ inches (86-character width) by $9\frac{3}{8}$ inches (56 lines):

1. Use 12-pitch Prestige Elite type face.
 - Text runs 64 characters wide from the right-hand side of the page. All text starts on character space 23 of the image frame.
 - Text runs 56 lines in length. First line of the text rides line 1 of the image frame, except for the first page of the introduction, which starts on line 17 of the image frame.
 - Paragraphs are block style.
 - Line space between each paragraph.
 - Set word processing machine at 88-character line length instead of 86. This setting will give fuller lines.
2. Number 1 headings (ALL CAPS) fall within the first 20-character space of the image frame, directly opposite the first line of text (see p. 36). If a number 1 head exceeds 20 characters, use additional lines.
3. Number 2 headings (Initial Caps and Underscored) fall within the first 20-character space of the image frame, directly opposite the first line of text that it introduces. If a number 2 head exceeds 20 characters, use additional lines.
4. Number 3 headings (Initial Caps) follow the same instructions as those for number 2 heads.
5. Number 4 headings (Initial Caps and Underscored) will start on character space 23 of line and will run into the text.



6. Page numbers will be typed by the Research Information Branch. The typist should number each page consecutively in the lower left-hand corner of the camera copy paper with a nonphoto blue pencil; this type of pencil will not reproduce during printing.
7. The body of the manuscript begins with the introduction; this page also carries the title of the publication and the author's name. (Headliner is used for the title and byline and will be provided by the arts and graphics unit.) Type the number 1 head and the first line of text on line 17 from the top blue line of the camera copy.

All additional pages will start on line 1 unless some other line is specified. Type to the bottom blue line of the camera copy frame unless instructed to do otherwise. Some reasons not to type to the bottom of the image frame are the following:

- If there is room for only the first line of a paragraph at the bottom of a page, start the paragraph on the next page.
- If there are two or three lines at the bottom of the page, but you need four or more lines to type a first-, second-, or third-level heading, go to the next page.
- If there is a footnote reference in the text, but not enough room to include the footnote on the same page, type both the line of text with the footnote reference and the footnote on the next page.
- If there is not room on a page for the last line of a paragraph, the last line as well as the line before should be carried over to the next page. Thus, the top of each page will have at least two lines of text.

Footnotes are to be typed at the bottom of the page on which they are cited. Single space between the last line of text and the 15-character solid line (more space may be added under the conditions listed above). Type footnotes directly under the line (do not leave a space between the line and foot-

note). Indent the first line of each footnote two spaces, and type any additional lines flush with the left margin. The last line of the footnote should be on the bottom line of the image frame.

8. Tables can be less than a page or run for several pages. They can be typed either vertically (upright) or horizontally (broadside) on the camera copy sheet and can be typed in any blue-line frame. The camera copy frame selected depends on both the length and width of a table. The editor usually marks all edited tables for camera copy reduction size and indicates whether they are vertical or horizontal tables.

All tables and charts should follow as closely as possible where they are cited in the text (except appendix tables which are placed at the end of the report). A table should be placed on the same page where it is cited, if possible. It should be placed at the bottom of the page, with three blank lines (quadruple space) between the last line of text and the table title. You must count how many lines are needed for the table to fit. All pages of a multiple-page table must be typed in the same blue-line frame.

9. If you make an error in typing, do not erase. Use typing correction fluid or self-correcting tape that is now included with some typewriters. These corrections are to be done while the camera copy is still in the typewriter. Do not cover an error with correction tape and then type on the tape.

The author is responsible for proofreading camera copy and for approving all camera copy before sending it to the editor (see pp. 38-39 for instructions on proofreading camera copy). Mark all corrections and changes with a nonphoto blue pencil in the margin of the copy (see p. 39 for a list of the standard proofreader's marks).

Make and check all corrections before you send the camera copy to the editor. If you find numerous errors on a page, the page should be retyped (and proofread again) rather than corrected.

A sample of a page of camera copy that is correctly typed follows:

Sample Camera Copy

Secondary data are also used with respect to ton-mile estimates for the farm inputs sector. Data for agricultural commodity movements are developed using average mileage estimates and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) production and processing volume data. Ton-miles for manufactured food products are estimated from data in the 1972 Census of Transportation (17). 1/

TRANSPORTATION FUEL REQUIREMENTS

Over 3.3 billion gallons of fuel were used to transport products in the food and fiber system in 1977: 619 million gallons for farm inputs, 1,416 million gallons for agricultural commodities, and 1,268 million gallons for manufactured food products.

Agricultural Inputs

Data indicate that it takes 114 million gallons of gasoline and 505 million gallons of diesel fuel annually to transport the seven major farm inputs: fertilizers, farm machinery, pesticides, formula feeds, petroleum fuels, feeder livestock, and seeds (table 2). Other miscellaneous inputs, such as contract combining and aerial applications of pesticides, are not included because of data limitations and the small magnitude of transportation fuel requirements. The distribution of fertilizers, formula feeds, and petroleum products accounts for about 80 percent of the fuel consumed.

Fertilizers

Transportation of 114 million tons of fertilizers in 1977 involved almost 44 billion ton-miles and required over 190 million gallons of diesel fuel (table 3). Truck movement accounted for only 14 percent of total ton-miles, but they accounted for 48 percent of fuel requirements for fertilizer transportation. After distribution from plants to terminal storage points by barge, rail, and pipeline, all fertilizers are eventually trucked an average of 100 miles from terminals to retail outlets, and then 5 miles from retail outlets to farms. All fuel associated with the movement from terminals to retailers is assumed to be diesel fuel, whereas all fuel associated with deliveries to farmers is assumed to be gasoline.

Farm Machinery

The 1972 Census of Transportation reports ton-mile figures for selected Standard Industrial Code (SIC) industries. Ton-miles for farm machinery and equipment (SIC 352) in 1972 totaled 1,905 million. The number of machines going to farmers in 1977 was only slightly lower than in 1972 so it is assumed that total energy requirements for the distribution of farm machinery and equipment in 1977 were equal to those calculated for 1972, or approximately 26.5 million gallons of diesel fuel (table 3).

Pesticides

The distribution of all pesticide products in 1977 required 3.5 million gallons of diesel fuel (table 3). Approximately 500,000 tons of active chemicals are used in pesticide production annually. These materials are shipped an average of 750 miles,

1/ Underscored numbers in parentheses refer to references listed at the end of this report.

Outside Composition

When camera copy is prepared outside your agency, it is typeset by an outside compositor under contract with GPO. The editor will mark the final copy of the edited manuscript for typesetting, and a printing specialist in the Information Division will send it out to be typeset.

Copies of the typeset galley proofs (which are delivered in single-column, continuous page format) are returned to your agency. You will proofread the galley proofs and make all corrections in the margin. The editor will return the corrected galley proofs to the typesetter (or compositor) with a mock-up, or dummy, of the layout that the compositor will use as a guide to paste down the camera copy.

The compositor will return a set of page proofs (that is, a duplicate of the camera copy) to the editor, who will send it on to you to check the corrections and to ascertain that the camera copy is complete. When you and the editor are satisfied that all corrections have been incorporated, the camera copy is ordered from the compositor.

You will check the camera copy and approve it. From this point on, the procedure is the same as that for manuscripts prepared within your agency.

Proofreading the Camera Copy

Wherever the camera copy for your report is prepared, you have essentially the same responsibility for proofreading the copy.

The correct way to proofread is for two people to read the camera copy at the same time. (One of these two people must be the author or another researcher who is familiar with the subject.) One person should read aloud from the edited version of the manuscript, and the other person should read the typeset camera copy (including all forematter, text, tables, footnotes, references, and appendixes).

To ensure accuracy of the camera copy, the proofreader should carefully follow these rules:

- Read every word and number of the copy, paying close attention to headings, paragraph beginnings, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Enunciate words distinctly.
- Spell out unusual or foreign words and the names of persons and places.
- Read a footnote as soon as it is referenced in the text.
- Read the table of contents and the list of tables and figures against the headings in the body of the report. They must match perfectly.
- Check a reference made in the text or a footnote to another part of the camera copy to make sure the reference is accurate.
- Check all heads, boxheads, and stub entries of continued tables for consistency of phrasing.

Mark all corrections and changes with a nonphoto blue pencil in the margin of the camera copy. The sample from the GPO Style Manual (see p. 39) shows the standard proofreader's marks and how they are used to make corrections.

If you run into an unusual problem or if you do not understand something, call the manuscript editor. It is better to ask questions than to make mistakes and have to correct them later.

PROOFREADER'S MARKS

○ Insert period	<i>Caps.</i> Caps—used in margin
△ Insert comma	<i>=====</i> Caps—used in text
:	<i>C + SC</i> Caps & small caps—used in margin
;	<i>=====</i> Caps & small caps—used in text
?	<i>L.C.</i> Lowercase—used in margin
!	/ Used in text to show deletion or substitution
~	<i>w.f.</i> Wrong font
▽	○ Close up
▽▽	⊖ Delete
---	⊗ Close up and delete
---	◎ Correct the position
#	□ Move right
	□ Move left
ld>	□ Move up
shill	□ Move down
	Aline vertically
▽	= Aline horizontally
(/)	□□ Center horizontally
[]	□□ Center vertically
□	⊕ Push down space
□□	⌒ Use ligature
¶	<i>eq. #</i> Equalize space—used in margin
no ¶	VVV Equalize space—used in text
tr	<i>stet.</i> Let it stand—used in margin
~~ Let it stand—used in text
sp	⊗ Dirty or broken letter
ital	<i>run over</i> Carry over to next line
	<i>run back</i> Carry back to preceding line
	<i>out, see copy</i> Something omitted—see copy
	3? Question to author to delete ³
	▲ Caret—General indicator used to mark exact position of error in text.

Checklist for Reviewing the Camera Copy

After the camera copy has been proofread and corrected and the corrections have also been proofread, you will review the copy for the last time before it is sent to the printer. Use this checklist to make a careful, final examination:

- Has the report been proofread completely? Remember, any mistakes at this stage will appear in the published report.
- Does the title read the same on the cover, the abstract page, and page 1?
- Are the pages in order?
- Are the tables in order and numbered correctly?
- Are the footnotes numbered consecutively, and do the footnote numbers cited in the text match the footnote numbers at the bottom of the page?
- Are the same type size and typeface used throughout the report?
- Is space for the title left on page 1?
- Do the contents entries match the first- and second-level headings in the text?
- Do the table titles agree with the table listing, if there is one?
- Is the space within the camera copy blue lines filled in completely from top to bottom on each page?
- Do the date and place of publication appear on the abstract page?

Proofreading the camera copy carefully is the only way to avoid publishing errors. Reports can be reprinted only if there are grievous errors attributable to printer's error or if the text is illegible.

Chapter 6: Distributing the Report to Readers

Getting your report into the hands of your readers is the most important aspect of the publication process. There are two methods of reaching your potential readers: (1) readers can buy the report from GPO or NTIS, and (2) your agency can send out a limited number of free copies to those individuals or groups whom you and the editor identify in the distribution plan as most vitally interested in your research.

Free or For Sale

ERS and SRS print no more than 1,000 copies of their publications for free mailing. The principal groups that may receive free copies of reports include the news media, USDA officials, other Federal agencies, and members of the Congress. Survey respondents, heads of university departments of agricultural economics, land-grant university libraries, authors, and a limited target audience determined by the authors may also receive copies, depending on agency policies. While supplies last, single free copies of ERS reports are available from RIB, but this office does not fill mail requests.

To help build GPO and NTIS sales, the Information Division provides the following services:

- Adds ordering information for research reports and periodicals to the *ERS Abstracts* newsletter, which is distributed free.
- Mails out separate research report advertisements and situation report press releases, with ordering information.
- Issues abstracts and summaries of research reports and press releases of situation reports—with ordering information—to a variety of computer systems.
- Adds ordering information for most reports and periodicals to the publications themselves.

All research reports are available for sale from NTIS. The price depends on the size of the publication (that is, on the number of pages). Thus, your report will always be available (either in microfiche or paper) through NTIS to interested readers, even when the initial supply order has been exhausted. All periodicals and those research reports designated for sale by GPO are available for sale directly from GPO. The price depends primarily on the number of pages, the postage class, and the frequency of publication. Both NTIS and GPO maintain their own advertising outlets.

Distribution Plan

The distribution plan is the way we determine how many copies of a report will be printed and to whom those copies will be sent. The plan, jointly prepared by the author and editor, becomes part of the clearance package approved by your division director.

You and the editor prepare the distribution plan together because you are familiar with the subject matter and know about the people who work in your field, while your editor is aware of some additional lists and governmental resources. Your input is critical because free distribution of your report is limited to 1,000 copies. The plan, therefore, must be right on target.

The next page shows a sample of a typical distribution plan for a research report that is limited to a press run of 1,000 copies.

The Information Division receives a small number of copies of the report for use as notification copies, as file copies, and as editorial copies or input copies for NTIS. The Department receives a set number of copies depending on the report series. Your editor will arrange to send copies to USDA's News Center, a good primary outlet for your information; the media will receive that information from the News Center and further disseminate it through their own outlets. Your editor will also check with other agencies to see if they are interested in your report.

Every ERS report goes to two predetermined groups: the heads of university departments of agricultural economics and the libraries of land-grant colleges

ERS RESEARCH MONOGRAPHS

Distribution Plan: _____

Series _____ GPO Sale _____ or NTIS Sales _____ Editor _____

RIB COPIES:
Bonnie Moore (77305) will pick up copies (hold for OKAY TO RELEASE)..... 20
Copies for NTIS, Linda Hatcher, Room 4309-S 40
Editor

DEPARTMENTAL COPIES:

GPA notification copies (25 for dept. series and 75 for AIBs and Ag. Handbooks).....	_____
News Center, Barry Jenkins, (447-9281), 250 maximum.....	_____
Congressional Liaison Office, Mary Haley, (447-7095).....	_____
EHS Reference Center, Rm. 147, CHI Bldg.....	_____

Other agencies--
Extension, Nancy Sowers, Room 6007-S (check with Sowers, 447-4111;
max of 50 copies or ride print order)
FAS, Sally Turrett, Room 5918-S (check with Turrett, 447-7937;
max of 50 copies or ride print order)
Other:
Other:

Pipeline Distribution--

No.	Description
P	Land-Grant/1890 Col. Lib., Agri. Econ. Dept. Heads, & others that are to receive all research monographs prepared by RIB. Order labels from CPC unit (part of ERSpub list).....

AUTOMATED MAILING LISTS:

AUTHOR'S SUPPLY (100 maximum)--
Name, address

Name, address _____

OTHER LABELS, ATTACHED

Subtotal..........

PLUS stock (about 100).....

TOTAL

(including the 1890 institutions). Their names and addresses are contained in EMS' automated mailing lists.

Your job, as author, is to identify any other people who might be interested in your report and to decide whether they should get a copy of the report. You need to ascertain the exact number of copies for each entry. We must know the total number of copies to be printed by the time your division director signs off on the clearance package.

You and your coauthors will want copies. You may also have specific names of people in other Government agencies, in agribusiness, or at other research posts who will want to read your published report.

You are responsible for preparing mailing labels for those people who will receive your report, but who are not on the automated mailing lists; the automated mailing lists provide the only labels prepared automatically. You will need to arrange for someone in your division to type the other labels.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

You now have an overview of the individual components of the process of planning, writing, and publishing your research.

Let us review the principal elements of good technical writing:

- Begin with a concise, direct statement of your purpose.
- Describe or address your readers. Tell them what difference your research will make to them.
- Organize your materials by listing your major findings and by constructing an outline around these findings in a logical sequence.

When you have focused on these three elements, you will be ready to write your first draft. After you have written each major section, write a concise, one-paragraph summary of it, and put these summaries at the beginning of the major sections.

Later, you can put all these summaries together to form a summary for your entire project. Use the inverted pyramid style, placing the most important finding first. Thus, you will be able to communicate to your readers exactly what you think is most important and what you want them to remember.

You now know more about the words, sentences, and paragraphs that make up the structure of good writing. You know what common writing problems to avoid and how to give your writing greater impact. You know more about the mechanics of Government writing—for example, the stylistic requirements and other conventions you need to observe for agency publication.

You know how to be your own first editor, before your manuscript makes its way through the formal publications and clearance process. As you review and revise, remember that you will have to work long and hard to communicate well with your readers; that means you have to become your own reader before you can become your own editor. After you have read your manuscript for content, read it again—aloud—for style. Ask yourself whether your words flow freely to express your ideas clearly. Ask several colleagues or friends to react.

Then, apply the final test. Will those people whom you asked to read your manuscript remember what they read when they put your manuscript down? Is what they remember precisely what you want them to remember?

When you are at last ready to submit your manuscript for review, remember that the editorial staff is there to help you make the publication process quicker and easier. If you follow the guidelines in this manual, the product of your research will be better.

Appendix: Report Series

Agricultural Economic Reports

Purpose: To make available semitechnical and semipopular information resulting from agricultural economics research.

Audience: Professional and technical workers in agriculture and related fields, especially those concerned with production, marketing, and consumption of agricultural products.

Content: Reports of economic research that will serve professional workers in the field of agricultural economics.

Agriculture Handbooks

Purpose: To publish manuals of information on agriculture and home economics needed by professional or technical workers in these fields.

Audience: Primarily professional or technical workers in agriculture and related fields.

Content: Reference information, including guides, specifications, glossaries of terms, and lists of plants and animals.

Agriculture Information Bulletins

Purpose: To publish popular, nontechnical information of a more specialized character than that in other publication series.

Audience: General public.

Content: Information of a more specialized character issued for a specific audience or purpose.

Bibliographies and Literature of Agriculture

Purpose: To provide a focal point for bibliographic information compiled by USDA subject specialists, librarians, and other personnel.

Audience: Scientists, specialists, students, and librarians.

Content: Bibliographic data on the title, author, subject matter, location, and other pertinent information on printed materials related to agriculture. Includes surveys of literature in a particular subject area.

Foreign Agricultural Economic Reports

Purpose: To make available semitechnical or semipopular information resulting from economic studies and analyses of foreign agricultural situations.

Audience: Professional and technical workers in agriculture and related fields, including related businesses and industries.

Content: Reports of economic research and analyses of foreign areas and situations, including the competitive position of U.S. agricultural products in given markets or geographical areas, and trends in foreign agricultural trade.

Rural Development Research Reports

Purpose: To make available technical and semitechnical information relating to the development of people, communities, and natural resources of rural America.

Audience: Researchers, decisionmakers, and others involved in developing human and natural resources in rural areas, especially those engaged in programs for rural community development and in land and water resource development and protection.

Content: Reports of socioeconomic research, including technical reports and semitechnical presentations of research data, that serve professional development specialists and decisionmakers dealing with rural development, natural resources, and environmental protection.

Statistical Bulletins

Purpose: To publish needed statistics on agriculture obtained and compiled as part of USDA's regular research.

Audience: Professional and technical workers and groups in agriculture, business, industry, and education.

Content: Statistics on such subjects as production, movement from the farm, receipts at principal markets, reshipments, farm and market prices, imports and exports, production of foreign countries, and foreign market prices.

Technical Bulletins

Purpose: To publish substantial original contributions of scientific or technical knowledge so that this knowledge may be available for adaptation, demonstration, and use in laboratories, on farms, and in factories.

Audience: Primarily scientists, specialists, and advanced students.

Content: Usually the full, final report of a research project or a major segment of a large research project; material of the highest scientific authority.

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